COOK COUNTY SHERIFF'S MERIT BOARD

SHERIFF OF COOK COUNTY,)	
vs.)	Docket # 1763
DAMITA DELITZ,)	Docket # 1703
Correctional Lieutenant,	Ś	2
Employee #)	
Star #237.)	

<u>DECISION</u>

THIS MATTER COMING ON to be heard pursuant to notice before Jennifer E. Bae, a Board Member, and the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board finds as follows:

Jurisdiction:

- 1. Damita Delitz, (herein after "Respondent") holds a position as a Correctional Lieutenant which involves duties and responsibilities to the public.
- Each member of the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board (hereinafter "Board") has been duly appointed to serve as a member of the Board pursuant to confirmation by the Cook County Board of Commissioners, State of Illinois, to sit for a stated term.
- The Board has jurisdiction of the subject matter of the parties in accordance with Chapter 55 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes.
- The Respondent was personally served with a copy of the Complaint and Notice of Hearing and appeared before the Board to contest the charges contained in the complaint.
- 5. The Board has heard the evidence presented by the Sheriff and the Respondent, and evaluated the credibility of the witnesses and supporting documents.

Background:

By complaint dated June 5, 2014, Sheriff Thomas J. Dart, sought suspension for one hundred and eight (180) days. The complaint alleges that Respondent violated the Rules and Regulations and General Orders of the Cook County Department of Corrections and Rules and Regulations of the Cook County Merit Board, specifically:

GENERAL ORDER 4.1

INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS, in its entirety, including but not limited to, the following subparts:

II. REQUIREMENTS

Misconduct, which impairs an employee's ability to perform his/her assigned responsibilities, or adversely affects or involves the Cook County Department of Corrections and/or the Office of the Sheriff of Cook County may be cause for disciplinary action.

Serious misconduct would include those violations of the law which constitutes a misdemeanor or a felony, or alleged/suspected, violations of Cook County Department of Corrections rules and orders which pose a threat to the safety of the staff or inmates or the security of the institution. Included also is misconduct committed while an employee is off duty/outside the institution where in the official character and status of the employee as a correctional officer, deputy sheriff, law enforcement officer, or civilian correctional employee becomes identifiable and calls into question the reputation of the County of Cook, the Office of the Sheriff, or the Department of Corrections.

A. Guidelines for SERIOUS MISCONDUCT include, but not limited to:

1. Negligence leading to an escape.

SHERIFF'S ORDER 11.2.20.0 (effective date: January 25, 2013)
RULES OF CONDUCT, in its entirety, including but not limited to, the following subparts:

VI. RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR ALL SWORN AND CIVILIAN CCSO EMPLOYEES

D. Prohibited associations, establishments, and activities.

CCSO employees shall not:

- 25. Fail to cooperate or fail to be truthful with external and/or internal agencies in an investigation of a criminal or civil matter.
- E. Duty functions.

CCSO employees shall:

- Maintain sufficient competence to properly perform the duties and responsibilities of their positions. Unsatisfactory performance shall not be allowed.
 - b. Unsatisfactory performance may be demonstrated by:

iv. the failure to conform to work standards established for the employee's rank, grade or position.

H. Reporting violations.

 Employees are prohibited from making a false report, written or oral.

VII. ADDITIONAL RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR SUPERVISORS

CCSO supervisors shall:

- A. Be responsible for subordinates' adherence to CCSO rules, regulations, policies, orders, directives and procedures.
- B. Be responsible and accountable for the maintenance of discipline and provide leadership, supervision, and example to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, and performance of CCSO operations.
- C. Be responsible for the job performance of all subordinates placed under them.

D.

- E. Delegate authority and functions where appropriate to subordinates, but shall be aware that responsibility remains with the supervisor who made the assignment.
- F. Remain answerable and accountable for all job-related failures on the part of their subordinates and subsequent failure to take the appropriate action to correct the deficiency.

COOK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT MERIT BOARD RULES AND REGULATIONS, in its entirety, including but not limited to, the following subparts:

Article X, Paragraph B

No Police Officer of the Cook County Sheriff's Police Department, nor any Correctional Officer of the Cook County Department of Corrections, nor any Deputy Sheriff of the Cook County Sheriff's Court Services Department shall:

3. violate any of the general orders, special orders, directives or rules and regulations of the CCSO.

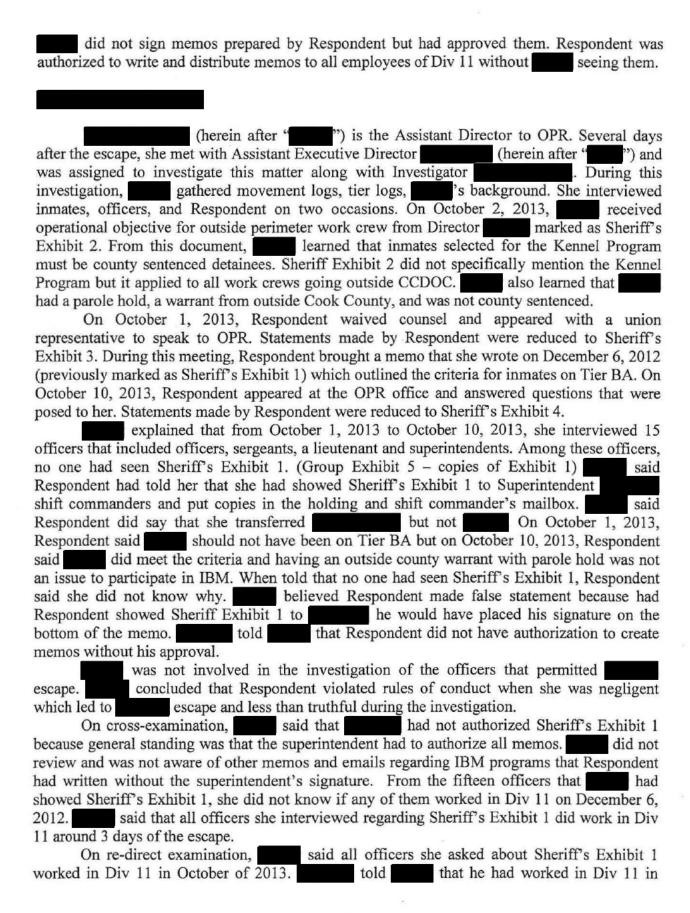
Issues Presented:

Whether the actions of the Respondent violated any of the General Orders and Rules and Regulations set forth above and what if any discipline is appropriate if a violation occurred.

Evidence Presented:

A hearing was conducted on January 12, 2015 and March 3, 2015 at the Cook County Administration Building, 69 W. Washington Street, Room 1100, Chicago, Illinois. Present were Assistant State's Attorneys and and Assistant General Counsels and on behalf of the Cook County Sheriff and Attorney on behalf of the Respondent.
The following exhibits were admitted into evidence:
Sheriff's Exhibits:
 A memo dated 12-6-2012 written by Lt. Delitz – criteria for inmates on tier BA Cook County Dept. of Corrections Outside Perimeter Work Crew Operational Plan A written statement made by Lt. Delitz to OPR on 10-1-2013 A written statement made by Lt. Delitz to OPR on 10-10-2013 Group exhibit – copies of Sheriff's Ex 1 shown to staff at Division 11 n/a A memo dated 08-27-2012 written by Lt. Delitz – list of inmates from Division 6
Respondent's Exhibits:
 Cook County Dept. of Corrections Div. 11 Divisional in-house transfer log dated 09-26-2013 A memo dated 10-2-2013 written by Sgt. to Lt. Delitz re: A memo dated 08-01-2012 written by AED to Sup. — Animal Care and Control / Outside Work Crew — Master List A memo dated 11-28-2012 written by AED to Lt. Delitz — Animal Care and Control and Sheriff's Volunteer Community Service Project — Master List A minutes for IBM meeting dated 08-09-2012 from Lt. Delitz to Director An email dated 08-27-2012 from Sgt. to Lt. Delitz re: Kennel workers A memo dated 09-30-2012 from Cmdr to All Division XI Lieutenants IBM Implementation Committee Agenda dated 10-16-2012 An email dated 01-18-2013 from to Lt. Delitz re: ACC Minutes dated 03-26-2013 from to Lt. Delitz Lt. Delitz personnel file
The following witnesses testified for the Sheriff:
(herein after ""), currently is the Div 3 Superintendent. Prior to that, he was the Superintendent of Div 11. worked for the Illinois Department of the Corrections (herein after "IDOC") for 26 years and retired from IDOC in 2004.

first met the Respondent when she was a sergeant at Div 4. He had known her for
approximately 2 years prior to working at Div 11 together. said Respondent was in charge
of Inmate Behavior Modification Program (herein after "IBM") which was created to impact
behavior and manage inmates. Currently there are 32 tiers at Div 11 including 17 year-old
inmates and general populations. explained that Tier CD was a worker's tier and Tier BA
was the IBM tier. There were 48 inmates housed on Tier BA on September 26, 2013 and he
believed 24 inmates from BA were scheduled to work at the Kennel Program that was created to
allow county sentenced inmates to leave the facility to work outside.
inmates in Tier BA were qualified to work at the Kennel Program. Inmates that had violent
backgrounds, sexual criminal history, parole hold, and warrants from outside county were not
eligible to work. In addition, inmates must wait 48 hours to be eligible to work.
With regard to inmate (herein after ""), he was transferred from
Tier CD to BA which was documented in the movement log. In September of 2013,
Respondent was in charge of inmate transfers within Div 11. When Respondent was not present,
the shift commander made decisions regarding inmate movements. Correctional Officers and
Officers in Transport do not have the authority to transfer inmates within tiers.
In September 2013, believed that he was responsible for IBM program and
Respondent was the coordinator with duties that included moving inmates according to their
qualification or housing assignments for programs already running. On September 28, 2013,
received a phone call from Lt. the shift commander on duty, informing him
that had escaped from the Kennel Program outside the jail. As soon as he received this
call, drove to CCDOC. While driving, called Respondent who informed him that
she had not transferred to Tier BA. later learned that inmate was captured 5
to 6 hours after the escape. He also learned that was not eligible to be placed on Tier BA
because he was a pre-trial inmate with a warrant from another county and a parole hold.
testified that the first time he saw the Sheriff's Exhibit 1 (a memo from Lt. Delitz
outlining the criteria for inmates on Tier BA) was right after secape. He received 5 days
suspension from this incident and used his vacation days to satisfy the suspension. He believed
he was suspended because he was the superintendent in charge of the program that allowed
to escape.
On cross-examination, admitted that correctional officers in the holding cells may
not know the criteria for Tier BA and in fact when there was no space available in general
population, officers did transfer inmates to specialized units such as IBM. said Tier BA
was not a county sentenced unit and that there were no General Orders or Rules and Regulations
governing IBM program since it was a pilot program. said Respondent was in charge of
the IBM Programs that included other programs such as parenting and yoga classes.
Respondent had written memos and emails regarding IBM Programs without having his
signature or other superintendents' signatures. He believed Respondent was not on duty on
September 28, 2013 when the escape occurred. He said CO and Lt. were the
officers that permitted to go out with other inmates in the Kennel Program. He did not and
was not involved in any discipline for and and was not aware of any
application process for inmates for the Kennel Program but was aware of the background check
being done. said he knew Respondent did not approve to be on the Kennel
Program.
On re-direct examination, said that there was a mixture of county and pre-trial
inmates on Tier BA but that only county sentenced inmates qualified for the Kennel Program.



December of 2012 but had never saw Sheriff's Exhibit 1. was unable to locate anyone that had seen Sheriff's Exhibit 1 prior to the escape.

DAMITA DELITZ:

Respondent was called as an adverse witness by the Sheriff. Respondent said she had Sheriff's Exhibit 1 drafted on December 6, 2013 with her signature, showed it to and disseminated to all shift commanders by leaving copies in their mailboxes. She did not remember if one was posted on Tier BA. When the escape occurred, asked Respondent for criteria for the Kennel Program, she gave a copy of the Sheriff's Exhibit 1 prior to his interview with OPR.

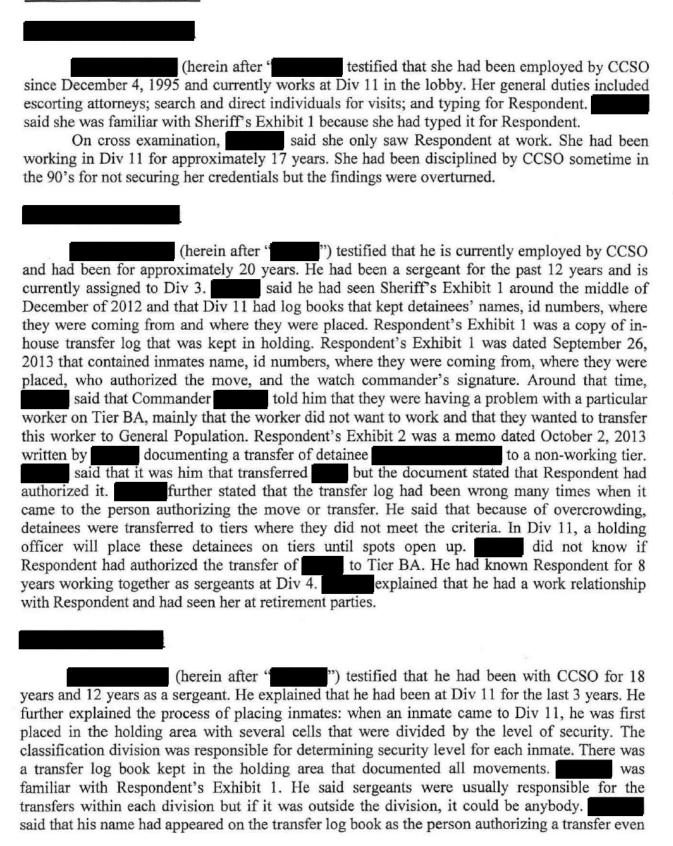
Respondent said that all inmates assigned to the Kennel Program and Sanitation were housed on Tier BA. Criteria for Kennel and Sanitation were the same when transferred to Div 11 from Div 6. Respondent said she had Sheriff Exhibit 1 drafted because the Kennel Program was part of IBM when it was incorporated and transferred from Div 6. Respondent said all inmates in Tier BA were in IBM but not all inmates housed in Tier BA qualified to work. Respondent said she did not always determined whether an inmate met the criteria for the Kennel Program because they were sometimes made by receiving, Officer or others. Respondent said Sheriff Exhibit 1 was for Div 11 and not for receiving. Respondent explained that there were two classifications on Tier BA: (1) inmates that were workers and (2) inmates that participated in IBM. She further explained that there were 48 inmates on Tier BA that included 10 for Sanitation and 16 for the Kennel Program. The inmates that participated in the Kennel Program were housed on the top or the bottom cells determined by the officers and were usually kept together. She admitted that she did not have a protocol in place to house the inmates that participated in the Kennel Program to avoid confusion.

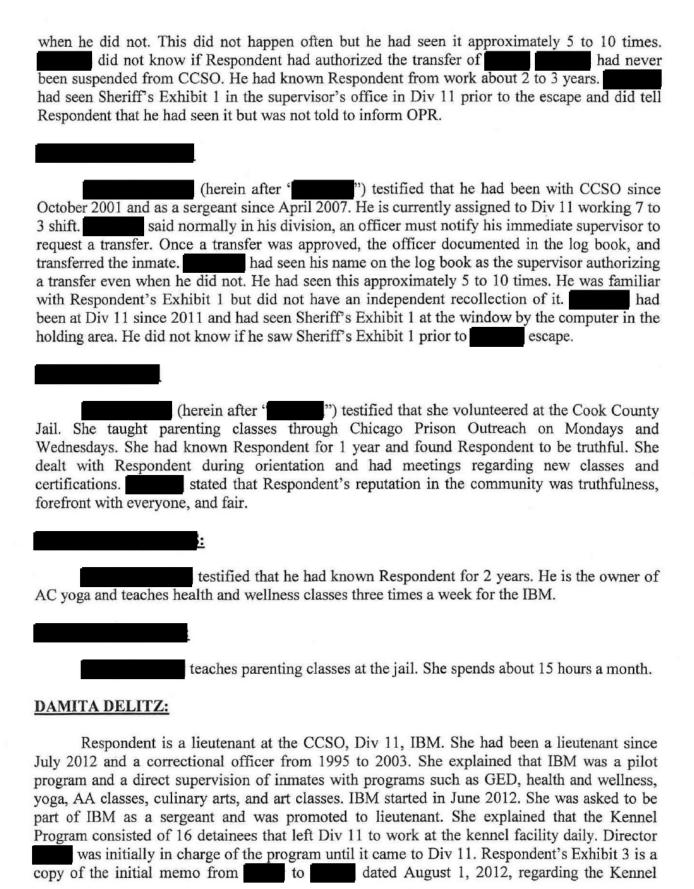
was qualified to be on Tier BA for IBM but not to be a Respondent testified that worker for the Kennel Program. Prior to having the Kennel Program transferred from Div 6 to Div 11, Respondent met with Respondent explained that when the Kennel Program was at Div 6, it consisted of county sentenced inmates but the goal was to incorporate inmates in IBM with inmates from Div 6. Respondent said she received memos marked as Sheriff's Exhibit 7 that were dated August 1st, August 27th, and August 28th of 2012 that contained names of inmates being transferred from Div 6 to Div 11. These memos were given to her during the first meeting with attended by and took minutes from the meeting where they discussed criteria for the Kennel Program but Respondent was not presented with any general orders or standard operating procedure to incorporate the Kennel Program into IBM. Sheriff's Exhibit 7, bate stamp 20, stated that "no changes are to be made to this list without authorization from Director or Lieutenant Delitz." Sheriff's Exhibit 7 was an inhouse Div 11 memo, dated August 27, 2012, presented to all shift commanders and officers assigned to Tier BA.

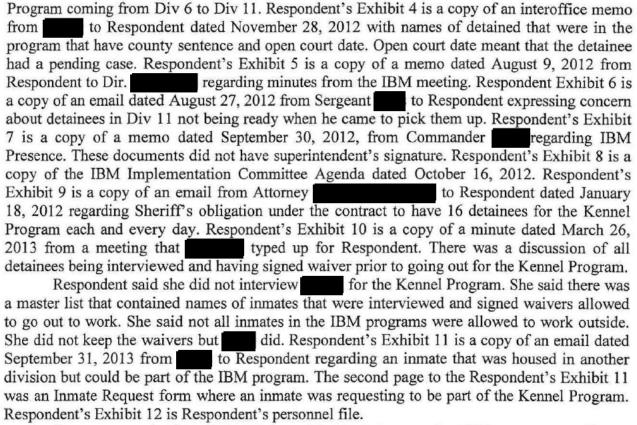
STIPULATION:

Stipulation by both sides that if called to testify, Superintendent would testify that he was interviewed by OPR on October 18, 2013; that he had never seen, authorized or received Sheriff's Exhibit 1 from Respondent; and that if he had approved Sheriff's Exhibit 1, it would have either his initials or signature on the document.

RESPONDENT'S CASE:







On cross-examination, Respondent testified that she was the IBM program coordinator that introduced certain programs into IBM and oversaw the incentive program's basic needs. She further testified that the commander, superintendent and the committee were in charge of determining whether a program was running properly. She said all inmates on Tier BA were in IBM, however, not all IBM inmates were eligible to leave to work outside. The inmates that were allowed to work outside were placed in certain cells. Respondent was in charge of determining which inmates were eligible to work outside and as a result, a list was created in conjunction with office. This same list was in holding and the Sergeants who picked up the inmates.

Findings/Conclusion of the Law:

Based on the evidence presented, and after assessing the credibility of witnesses and the weight given to the evidence including all the exhibits that were admitted, the Board finds that the Respondent did violate Sheriff's Order 11.2.20.0 Rules of Conduct, VII Additional Rules and Regulations for Supervisors A, B, C, E, and F and therefore violated Cook County Sheriff's Department Merit Board Rules and Regulations Article X, Paragraph B.

Respondent, as the person in charge of implementing all programs under IBM and the Kennel Program being part of it, was responsible for all subordinates job-related failures. Additionally she failed to have a protocol in place to house the inmates in the Kennel Program separately to avoid any confusion with inmates participating in the IBM but not qualified to work outside. The Board did not receive a copy of the list that contained the names of the inmates participating in the Kennel Program, however, Respondent did testify that such a list did exist at Tier BA and in holding. Since Respondent was in charge of the IBM and knew that not all inmates housed on Tier BA were eligible to work, she should have housed them separately to avoid any mistake. The transfer log book dated September 26, 2013 did show that Respondent was the person authorizing the transfer of and there was no testimony by any witnesses on either side that said otherwise other than Respondent's statement. There were witnesses that did testify that the log book was sometimes wrong but no one had personal knowledge whether Respondent had authorized the transfer of or that the log book was incorrect. As far as the Sheriff Exhibit 1, the Board believes that this memo was created on December 6, 2012 as testified to by Respondent, CO Sergeant Sergeant . The Board does believe that Respondent was truthful with OPR during the October 1st and 10th of 2013 interviews.

It is important to note that Superintendent received 5 days suspension for this incident whereas he was in charge of the Kennel Program and the Respondent being in charge of coordinating this program and incorporating it into IBM.

Order:

Wherefore, based on the foregoing, it is hereby ordered that the Sheriff's request to suspend Respondent for 120 days from the Cook County Sheriff's Office is denied and Respondent is suspended for 5 days effective as of June 5, 2014.

James P. Nally, Chairman

Byron Brazier, Vice-Qhairman

Brian/J. Riordan - Hearing Officer

Kim R. Widup, Board Member

Dissort as to Lewin of Susp.

Jennifet E Bae, Board Member

Patrick Brady, Board Member

Date June 14, 2015